

THE REBELLIOUS SHADOW

By Charles Leonard Moore

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PROFESSOR AKRON was easily the most conspicuous though the most retiring member of the faculty of the L— University. Because of his prodigious learning, and the repute it brought the university, he was released from any but voluntary duties in lecturing and instruction. For the most part he buried himself in his large, gloomy house, amid his fossils and specimens, busied with writing papers on paleontology and monographs on geology. But occasionally, of course, he did go out, and his appearance was such as to engage the attention and fix the remembrance forever.

He was tall, very thin and always clothed in a long, closely buttoned frock coat. If the weather afforded any excuse whatever he wore a shawl around his shoulders, after a fashion which had gone out as thoroughly as his moustache. His stock of yellow hair stood up or projected in writhing wisps in every direction like Medusa's serpents. He had bushy eyebrows, great goggle eyes, long thin nose, perked up lips and a chin which retreated into his high collar until it was not. Such was the picture which existed in the public mind of this learned and excellent man.

One night the Professor sat in his study. It was a large, lofty room with the usual furniture of desks, tables and bookcases, but it was given a grim and ghostly air by the skeletons and relics of bygone ages which decorated the walls or hung suspended from the ceiling. The restored anatomy of Eolippus was planked above one bookcase. Over the fireplace gaped the jaws of a Dinosaur, and the bones of a Mastodon made a sort of a cave in one corner. The large table desk before which the Professor was seated was lighted by a powerful electric bulb in a ground glass globe. There was no other illumination in the room.

As he bent over his task, which was the sorting of some fossil specimens recently unearthed in Nevada, he heard a yawn behind him and then an impatient voice exclaimed:—"I am sick and tired of this!"

The Professor turned quickly around, for he had supposed himself alone. And alone he seemed to be. No living being was visible in the room. But on the wall, back of him, he saw his shadow, greatly magnified, and apparently in a state of independent motion. Its arms were stretched out as though in weariness, and its lips were trembling as if they had just spoken.

"Who are you and what are you tired of?" he cried, starting up. The shadow preserved its former outline, though it should have altered with its owner's posture.

"I am your Shadow," its voice replied, "and I am tired of you and of this existence. This is a very dog's life for a Shadow. I don't even get the red blood of sunshine in my veins once a week. I am shut up in this musty old house, where, in the daytime, I eke out a pale anaemic existence, and where at night I am created solely by the electric light. No romantic moonlight projection for me or the soft suffusion of fire or candles. Don't you know that the electric light is bad for the morals of a shadow?"

"No, I didn't," said the Professor, rather astonished, but taking the matter calmly. "Have you anything else to complain of?"

"I have nothing but complaints," answered the shadow. "It has been thus always. You were a puny, peaked boy, shut up over books, while your fellows were playing in the sun, and I had to be tied to you. Then came your college days and your professorship, with your eternal mousing over old bones and skeletons. Do you suppose I care anything for skeletons? They remind me too much of my own state. A shadow likes to be gay. A shadow likes to see life. A shadow likes to be admired by the ladies. What chance have I? I think I am as well turned out as a shadow as the most, but I repeat, what chance have I to show it? I don't even get the society of my own mates and equals.

"I warn you that I am tired of the whole thing. I am going to break away from you occasionally—have some time off. You can do very well without me, for you live so much alone that nobody will know whether you have a shadow or not. You don't deserve to be well set up with such a property, anyhow!"

With this the Shadow gave a convulsive twist and seemed to wrench itself from its juncture with the Professor's feet.

The Shadow Gets Into Trouble.

The latter looked about him—the Shadow had certainly disappeared. Place himself anyway he would against the light, nothing defined itself from the obstruction. Well, it did not much matter. It would not affect his great study of the possible fossils of the Aztec period. He would not go out while his black familiar was away. His housekeeper was shortsighted and for the other servants he could keep in the twilight while they were about. The Shadow did not threaten entire separation.

Indeed, he soon found that by some law of its being it was required to be on duty for some part of each day. If he lost it in the morning it reappeared before dinner. If it left at night he

was only an archaeologist, by the way, had taken sides and had written a bitter pamphlet attacking the authenticity of the remains. A meeting of the supporters of the discovery was to take place one evening, and the Professor was naturally curious about it, but he dismissed the matter from his mind, until the next morning one of his opponents called on him, wearing a grave face. He began by saying that he knew the Professor was an enemy, but he had supposed he was an honorable one.

"Bless my soul," said the Professor, "and why not?" "After your conduct last evening you can hardly expect people to accept an eavesdropper and a spy as an honorable gentleman."

"Eavesdropper? Spy?" shouted the Professor. "Explain yourself!"

"You need no explanation, sir, but to satisfy you we know, I will tell you. We were in the midst of a most secret discussion last evening, when one of

had to support her. And do you know what the infernal thing did? It glided around the wall, across the floor up to her and kissed her. I grabbed it by the collar, as well as I could, and kicked it downstairs, as well as I could. I'd thank you to keep it home in the future. There it is on the floor behind you now," and with that the young fellow jumped and trampled on the dark figure on the carpet.

"But what is the good of doing that?" remonstrated the Professor.

"Well," said the other, "if you had such a thing come between you and a girl when you were talking female suffrage, you would manhandle it too, if you could."

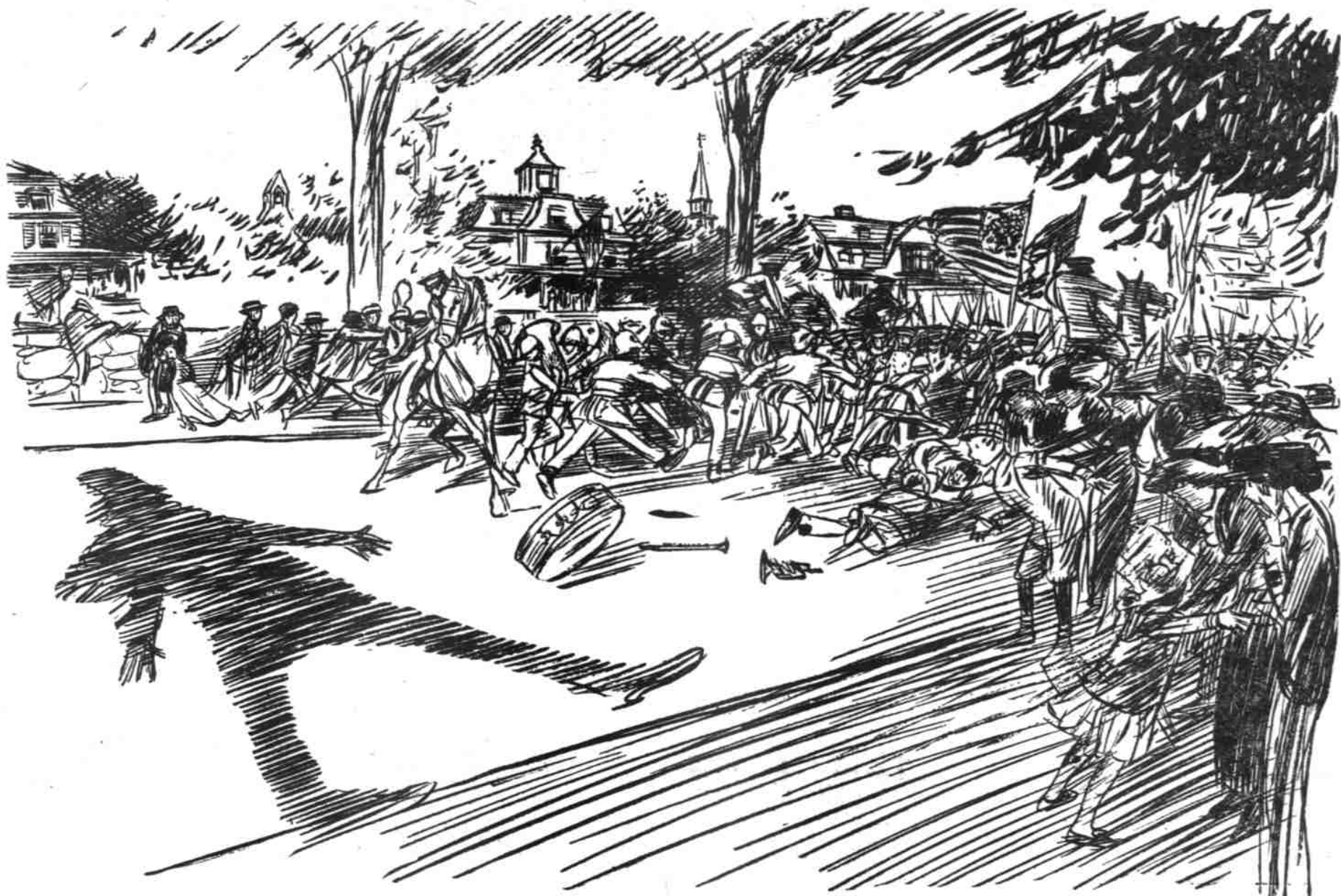
The Shadow was a strenuous and indefatigable worker in its hours of liberty. Like Gaius's ghost, it could not be laid. It began to be seen not only in the town of L—, but at far distant points. Apparently it

Shadow turned toward them as if to see what was the matter they broke and bolted to the rear, scattering the band right and left and charging down on the thin lines of the militia. At this unexpected onset the soldiers, too, turned, and the whole procession fled down the street, pursued by that black, gesturing phantom.

This was too much. The Mayor protested to the Provost and the two, together with some other members of the faculty, called on the Professor and demanded that he curb his shadow, and compel it to ways of peace and pleasantness. He heard them out and then said, sadly, but firmly:—

"There are some things, gentlemen, beyond a man's control. He has less to do with the making of his shadow than with any other of his corporeal or mental attributes. It comes into existence without any volition of his. It increases or diminishes as the sun or any artificial light decays. It dies when he sleeps. I know not how to meet your views."

"Perhaps," said a German member of the faculty, who was his bitterest enemy, "if der Herr Professor



The Whole Procession Fled Down the Street Pursued by That Black Destroying Phantom.

found it by his side on rising. It spoke no more about its wrongs and gave no account of its doings.

But accounts soon began to come in from outside to trouble his tranquillity. The Professor's Shadow, like the Professor's self, was too distinctive to fail of recognition if seen. Every man, woman and child in L— would know it. A few mornings after its first transgression a confrère of the Professor met him as he was hurrying through the college yard.

"Ha, you old slyboots, you gay dog!" he said, giving Akron a dig in the ribs.

"What do you mean?" said the latter, looking at his friend, innocently.

"That's right. Brazen it out. I don't suppose you ever heard of Aeolus Hall?"

This was a celebrated dance house in the vicinity of the university, forbidden to the students, but nevertheless frequented by the light hearted and frivolous among them.

"Surely," said the Professor, "I have heard of it."

"Yes, and have been in it," said the other.

"Not to my knowledge," protested Akron.

"Well," said his friend, "I saw you coming down the steps from it last evening. You disappeared around the corner before I could catch up with you. That is, I saw your shadow, your unmistakable shadow; and I suppose you were not far off."

What could the good man say?

But worse was to come. There was a controversy raging in the University over some recent finds of supposed valuable Egyptian relics, and the Professor, who

our party chanced to look up and saw your shadow outlined on the wall at the other end of the room. We all saw it; there could be no mistake—there was your tumbled hair, your prying nose, your no chin, your muffling shawl. We made for you in a body, but you glided out of the door and got away. And lucky for you, you did."

Again, what hope to explain!

But evidences of the divorce between the reality and the shade, between the Professor and his dark familiar, soon became too abundant to be denied.

Kicked It Downstairs.

The Shadow was seen in places where the Professor could not possibly have been, and in many instances his alibi was clearly proved. This did not altogether release him from opprobrium. It was said that he had revived the Black Art and, while pretending indifference and innocence, sent his shadow out into the world to pry into other people's affairs and to witness doings he himself refrained from. One morning the Athletic Instructor in Physical Culture bounced into the Professor's study, and exclaimed excitedly:—

"Well, sir, I kicked that confounded shadow of yours downstairs last evening."

"Bless my soul!" said the Professor, "did you?"

"Yes," said the other, "I was calling on a young lady and we were having an animated discussion on female suffrage when she happened to turn and saw your shadow peering through the doorway—half in and half out. She screamed and I

had the power of projecting itself through space with the greatest economy of time, though occasionally it appeared on railroad trains and steamships, as though it enjoyed the immunity from paying fare. It was reported as having been seen on the pavement of the Pantheon at Rome, under the eye of the great dome. It had marched down the long galleries of the Louvre, scaring women and children into a panic. Nay, a statement was current that at a close session of the House of Commons it had appeared in the aisle, had examined the mace and the Speaker's wig, and then had flitted about the benches, poking its impertinent nose over the members' shoulders. Its tastes were omnivorous, but in the main its proclivities were low. Night after night it was said to have haunted the Mabelle and other questionable resorts in Paris, mingling with the dancers and not wanting to leave until the lights were turned out.

The climax came when the militia companies of L— decided to give a street drill and parade. They turned out with a full military band and a cavalcade of policemen to head the line. It was muddy, a bright June sun blazing down on the asphalted street, and of course what shadows were made were gathered under the feet of the troops and horses. Yet there, heading the whole array, floating on the white avenue, and keeping step and time to the music, was the Professor's Shadow at its most definite and largest outline—snaky hair, sharp nose, muffling shawl and all. The horses were the first to notice the strange object. They began to snort and rear and back, and as the

should debase, his shadow would have no legal or odd standing."

"Thanks for your hint, sir," said the Professor. "You have given me an idea. Let me have a day or two and perhaps I can abate this nuisance."

Having made some preparation, the Professor sat that evening in his brilliantly lighted study, waiting the return of the truant Shadow. Late, very late, it came in, slowly stealing through the crevice under the doorway, and moving softly though unsteadily about the floor, until it found the Professor's feet and attached itself.

"Are you there, Shadow?" inquired the Professor.

"Yesh," answered the thing, thickly.

"Where have you been?"

"Been out with the boys—shelabrating!"

The Professor switched off the electric light and the room was in darkness.

"What are you doing?" came the voice, alarmed out of intoxication.

"Doing?" answered the Professor, "I am obliterating you. You cannot exist without light, and light you shall not have. The door is locked, the windows are shuttered and double curtained. Not a ray of light shall enter here until I will it. I have made arrangements to have my meals served through a hole in yonder dark closet. The chimney will serve for ventilation. You are immured, imprisoned, buried until you agree to stop your accursed wanderings and be a true and loyal Shadow again."

"Oh, if I could only get at you," said the Shadow, with a sound as of gnashing of teeth.

How It All Ended.

"You can't," coolly replied the Professor. "You are less than a shadow, you are nothing. You do not exist. Nor shall you until you promise to reform. I am prepared to spend the rest of my life in the dark room, rather than be made a martyr and a ridiculous rascal by my own shadow."

"But I can't break off all at once," pleaded the annihilated thinness.

"You must," answered the Professor. "Listen! For your sake I am willing to change my habits. I will go out into the streets. I will drive in automobiles. I will attend those atrocious football games, I will even go to the commencement ball, a thing I have not done for thirty years. You shall have all the rights and advantages that a well-regulated shadow is entitled to. But you must cease your tricks. You must never again detach yourself from my person, or do anything to make me conspicuous or foolish. If you once break these terms I will give you no other chance, but will shut myself and you up forever. It is life or death for you! Which do you choose?"

There was a long pause and a writhing sound as though the Shadow was wrestling with itself. Finally he said, suitably:—

"You don't give a fellow a chance. Of course, I have got to agree. Life is sweet to me as to any one. But I must say your programme is mighty mild for a chap who has had a taste of real living."

And so the compact was sealed and the Rebellious Shadow ended its travels!

One On Somebody—A Little Human Comedy.

BY W. J. LAMPTON.

TIME—The present.
Place—Anywhere.
Dramatis personae—Somebody, Everybody, Nobody.

Scene, the earth; Everybody on it; enter Somebody with much pomp; observes Everybody.

Somebody (condescendingly)—"I beg your pardon." Everybody (carelessly)—"Don't mention it. Who are you?"

Somebody (with dignity)—"Don't you know me?" Everybody (same manner)—"Don't you know me?"

Somebody—"No. Who are you?" Everybody—"Who are you?"

Somebody—"I am Somebody." Everybody (critically)—"Oh, you are, are you?"

Somebody (indignantly)—"Yes, I am." Everybody (perhaps you only think you are.)

Somebody—"I know I am." Everybody—"How do you know?"

Somebody—"Everybody says so." Everybody (haughty)—"I beg your pardon."

Somebody (with confidence)—"I said everybody says so."

Everybody—"Well, I'm Everybody." Somebody—"Oh, indeed; thank you. I'm so glad, because now that you have seen me you can say I am Somebody."

Everybody—"But I don't." Somebody (puzzled)—"Then why should I be informed that everybody says I'm Somebody?"

Everybody—"Don't ask me." Somebody (more puzzled)—"If I don't ask Everybody how can I know what everybody says?"

Everybody—"Well, I've told you once that everybody doesn't say you are Somebody and—"

Somebody (impulsively)—"But everybody does say so and—"

(Enter Nobody.)

Nobody—"Ho, here; what's the disputing about?" Everybody—"What business is it of yours?"

Nobody (smiling)—"It's yours, isn't it?" Everybody—"Yes, it is."

Nobody—"Then if it's yours, it's mine. Don't you know the proverb?"

Everybody—"Who are you?" Nobody—"I know you, all right."

Somebody (eagerly)—"Don't you know me, too? Don't you know I'm Somebody?"

Nobody—"Sure, I do." Somebody—"Please tell everybody then."

Nobody—"I have already."

Everybody—"What?" Nobody (to Everybody)—"I've told you that this was Somebody."

Somebody (to Everybody)—"There, I told you so."

Nobody—"And, what is more, Everybody knows I know you are Somebody."

Somebody (to Everybody)—"Good, good! Now will you believe?"

Everybody (to Nobody)—"Who are you?" Nobody—"I'm Nobody."

Somebody throws a fit; Everybody laughs and Nobody is sorry.

(Curtain.)